

**TOWING TRAINING GUIDELINES**

**OBJECTIVE:**

This exhibit provides a basic summary of employee responsibilities, safety, and operation for towing equipment and supplies.

MRP Form 124, Safety Checklist for Towing/Carrying Equipment, can be used to assist vehicle operators with general towing procedures.

Supervisors or VAOs should follow the guidelines listed below:

a. **BEFORE TOWING:**

- (1) Verify that the vehicle and equipment do not exceed the Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR).
- (2) Verify that the hitch is proper for the weight being towed.
- (3) Physically check the hitch and ball to ensure that they are properly secured and that the safety chains are in place. Safety lock the hitch with a padlock and bar.
- (4) Physically check the trailer lights to ensure that all tail lights, running lights, directional signals, and brake lights are clean and operating.
- (5) Check mirrors on the vehicles to ensure adequate rear and side visibility.
- (6) Check the electronic braking system, as appropriate.
- (7) Ensure adequate tire pressure and tread.
- (8) Check the proper loading of the trailer and ensure it is properly locked.
- (9) Check the lug nuts on the trailer wheels for tightness every 10,000 miles.
- (10) Review the areas of the manufacturer's operation manual concerning proper loading and towing.

## MRP MOTOR VEHICLE FLEET MANAGEMENT MANUAL

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### b. DURING TOWING:

- (1) Avoid sharp turns. Normal turns should be wider to prevent jackknifing or curb jumping.
- (2) Allow ample room for the trailer when changing lanes.
- (3) Avoid sudden, hard stops.
- (4) Be cognizant of cross winds.
- (5) When backing up, remember:
  - (a) Opposite steering procedures, and
  - (b) Sharp maneuvers result in jackknifing.
- (6) Spot check the trailer through the rearview mirrors.
- (7) Be sure to allow for proper clearances under trees, tunnels, bridges, etc.
- (8) Be aware of handling differences when towing an empty trailer versus a loaded trailer.

### c. DISCONNECTING OR PARKING THE TOWED VEHICLE:

- (1) Check trailer wheels by placing blocks or wedges to keep wheels from moving.
- (2) Check the placement of "fifth" wheel before removing the hitch.
- (3) Double check to ensure all chains and wires are disconnected before moving the towed vehicle.
- (4) Store the trailer on level ground with boards under each tire.
- (5) The tires should be off the ground, when possible, if storing the trailer for extended periods.